Our Purpose
Your Western Wisconsin District Mission Board exists to encourage the seeking and finding of lost souls within our district's borders through the establishment and support of new churches, as well as through new ministry sites of already established congregations. As we celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, may we renew our zeal and passion as a district to share the pure gospel with as many people as possible.

Our Board
Currently, there are four men serving on the board. John Deglow (St Mark's, Watertown) and Pastor Paul Schupmann (St John's, Juneau) were elected to six year terms at last summer's district convention. Ron Demulling (St John's, Cornell) is our board's veteran member. He began serving in 2008 and has three years remaining on his second term. I was elected to the board in 2014 and graciously assumed the reigns as chairman last summer, replacing Pastor Nathan Strutz. Because of an increase in mission activity in our district we are planning to add two new members (1 layman, 1 pastor) at the 2018 Western Wisconsin district convention (as allowed for by our district constitution and by-laws). We would encourage that you consider forwarding on to our district's Nominating Committee the names of outreach minded pastors and laymen.

Missions Conference
Unfortunately, the Missions Conference scheduled for last October at the Wintergreen Resort and Conference Center in Baraboo had to be cancelled because of an unusually low number of registrations. Because of the many events planned for this fall with the Reformation celebration we already hadn't planned on having a Missions Conference in October 2017. There has been some talk of meeting another month of the year (like January?) as well as perhaps meeting in a different location (like the Twin Cities?). There's even been talk about holding this conference every other year instead. The Planning Committee will have to meet soon and make some decisions. But God willing the Missions Conference will be back! Please remember that this conference is not only for home mission pastors, but rather for all mission minded pastors and laymen.

Mission Festival Speakers & Presentations
We are willing and available to serve as preachers and Bible Class presenters for Mission Festivals, as our schedules allow. Send me an email with your requested date for Mission Festival, service times, etc, and we will try to help. Speaking of mission festivals, our mission board thinks it's a great idea to have 'em! The more God's people hear about the lost being found globally they will no doubt be all the more motivated to act and witness locally. Keep in mind that the synod's Board for Home and World Missions departments can help with scheduling a missionary as your guest speaker. You can even go to the synod's website. Click on Resource Center, and then Missions. You should be able to find the form that needs to be completed for a speaker request.

Multi-Site Ministry
Both Pastor Schupmann and Pastor Mahnke attended the National Multi-Site Conference for WELS Churches last November in Tuscon, Arizona. It was excellent! Plans are already being made for another conference like it in the future. If you aren't familiar with the advantages and concept of multi-site ministry, I would encourage you to watch an interview from last year with Pastor Nathan Strutz. You can find it at: http://wels.net/event/multi-site. This approach to ministry is gaining traction and happening more and more throughout both our district and our synod.
Updates On Western Wisconsin District Missions & Mission Activity

- **St. Paul, Adams, WI**: Unsubsidized (Shepherd Ron Demulling, Pastor Brian Schmidt) - The gospel ministry at St. Paul, Adams continues to be faithfully served by Pastor Brian Schmidt. St. Paul, Adams is a second site of St. Paul, Mauston, began with no synod subsidy and continues to have the status of an Unsubsidized mission. The Lord has blessed the regular gathering around the means of grace and St. Paul, Adams has seen growth in numbers over the last 3 years from the twenties to over 100 and has seen its existing members grow spiritually as they connect themselves more to the gospel of Christ. The congregation is worshiping in a former day care facility and is rapidly growing out of this facility. The congregation has purchased land and has it fully paid off and is currently working with CEF and Builders for Christ to construct a new worship facility on that property. The WW DMB is working closely with the congregation to support and encourage their efforts to further God’s kingdom and reach the lost with the only message that has the power to save sinners. We pray that our gracious God will continue to bless the congregation’s outreach efforts in the community of Adams.

- **Fitchburg, WI**: With Stevens Point now having WELS presence with The Word, Fitchburg is now the largest city in the state without a WELS congregation. The members of Resurrection Lutheran Church in Verona are looking to change that! They are exploring the possibility of beginning a new site in the city. There is no organized outreach going on at the present time. However, there are members of several WELS congregations living in the area and it is hoped these individuals could form a core group to begin outreach and, God willing, begin a new location for gospel ministry.

- **Horicon, WI**: (Pastor Paul Schumpmann, talks with the DMB began in 2016) - In 2016, St. John's Ev. Lutheran in Juneau, WI started looking at a second site (church, preschool, child care... everything is on the table right now as we wrestle with our ministry plan) in Horicon, WI. St. John's has a strong core of members that are interested in taking on the project. Horicon currently has no WELS church in Horicon but has a thriving jobs market, especially in John Deere. Recently, John Deere committed 43 million dollars to expand its operations in the city. As a result, more jobs will be coming to the city and more housing will be put in and around the city. Mission Counselor Pastor Mark Birkholz was contacted to assist St. John's in October and he visited in November to establish a relationship with St. John's and to learn a little about what we were wanting to do in Horicon. In November Pastor Schupmann of St. John's went to a multi-site conference in Tuscon, AZ to learn more about the different types of Multi-site ministry that is being done in our synod and around the globe. Since the conference St. John's - Juneau, Good Shepherd - Beaver Dam, and St. Stephen's- Beaver Dam, have all thought about how they might help in this project and do multi-site work together as existing congregations. On March 1, 2017, Pastor Mark Birkholz did an official survey of Horicon over a period of three days. While we wait for the official report from Pastor Birkholz our congregation continues to canvass the city of Horicon. St. John's, Good Shepherd, and St. Stephen's in the meantime have been meeting and are starting to do simple multi-site things together including: Actively praying for one another in church, advertising for each others special services (VBS, anniversary celebrations, etc.), planning joint fellowship opportunities, joint worship services, joint evangelism meetings and workshops, and this fall will be implementing a joint Bible study. Horicon has given St. John's and the surrounding churches an opportunity to look at how we can all help in growing the kingdom of God as we spread the gospel individually, together with local congregations and as a synod working with our District Mission Board.
• **Monroe, WI:** Resurrection Lutheran Church in Verona has entered into merger talks with Mount Olive Lutheran Church in Monroe. The congregations are discussing becoming a multi-site congregation in order to best capitalize on the strengths of both locations in order to continue reaching out to the lost in Monroe and the surrounding area. Pastor Don Swartz is retiring in August and it is hoped the congregations will have a multi-site plan developed by that time.

• **Good News, Mt. Horeb, WI:** Subsidized (Shepherd Paul Schupmann, Pastor Jon Bauer) - The gospel ministry at Good News Lutheran continues to be faithfully served by Pastor Jon Bauer. Through the regular gathering around the means of grace, Good News has seen growth in numbers and has seen its existing members grow spiritually as they connect themselves more to the gospel of Christ. The congregation of Good News is still worshiping in a store front property but is gathering funds to purchase land and then to build a church within the community. They have been faithfully meeting to make these plans as well as doing a great job of laying out an aggressive ministry plan for today and the future. God willing Good News will be able to break ground in 2019 or 2020. Please keep the congregation of Good News in your prayers as they put their trust in the Lord.

• **Richland Center, WI** (Shepherd John Deglow, Pastor Dan Lewig): Finished first full year of outreach efforts into Richland Center. 2nd Easter For Kids grew from 25 in year 1 to 40 in year 2 (29 from the community!) Prospect and core group continues to grow, with strong regional support by area congregations. Largest outreach event to date being planned for this Christmas, a “Journey to Bethlehem” live nativity (December 16th), with support coming from Lakeside Lutheran High School and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. Praying to start services Christmas 2018. Our Board is hoping to seek from the Board for Home Missions this fall the status of Unsubsidized for this ministry.

• **Amazing Grace, Roscoe, IL:** Unsubsidized (Shepherd Paul Schupmann, Pastor Clint Burow) - The saints of Amazing grace continue to worship at Prairie Hill School in South Beloit. Pastor Burow reports that the church’s core is in the word regularly and that they are no longer in debt. The congregation has been averaging around 55 per week and things have been going well. Amazing Grace has a well laid out plan for evangelism and they pray that the Holy Spirit would continue to bless their efforts as they share Christ. Amazing Grace would like to one day build a church on their land that they own but trust that God will allow that to happen as he sees fit.

• **The Word, Stevens Point, WI:** Subsidized (Shepherd Jeff Mahnke, Pastor James Roecker) - With a population in 2010 of 26,717, Stevens Point was the largest city in Wisconsin without the presence of the WELS. That’s changed, by God’s grace. A few years ago the members of Divine Word in nearby Plover purchased a building in downtown Stevens Point that originally had been an American Legion Hall. It was transformed beautifully into a worship facility and given the name “The Word”. A dedication worship service was held this past January 29th. Pastor James Roecker, a 2015 Seminary graduate, was assigned to be the pastor for this second site of Divine Word with an emphasis on campus ministry at the University of Wisconsin – Stevens Point. Sunday worship attendance from February through May has been 69. On average 24 college students attend a campus bible study and meal on Thursday evenings. It’ll be a busy summer and fall at The Word as well. On July 2nd there will be worship and a concert featuring Mike Westendorf. A Vacations Bible School will be held on July 14-15. The Word is also looking into hosting a “Praise & Proclaim” initiative this fall to which area WELS congregations may also be invited to join in.

• **Wausau, WI:** Salem Lutheran Church is located on the northeast side Wausau, a town of 40,000. In 1980, Salem had 599 souls. They currently have only 70 members, the majority of whom are retired. There are
discussions taking place with St Peter Lutheran Church in nearby Schofield about possibly merging the congregations into one for the sake of more effectively reaching out to the neighborhoods all around Salem.

- **Rural Wausau:** A meeting was held on May 21st at Grace Lutheran Church in the township of Maine (north of Wausau). About 35 people were there representing the following churches: Trinity of Berlin, Salem of Wausau, St John’s of Rib Falls, St Paul’s of Naugart, Grace of Maine and Zion of Edgar. Most of these churches are within a 15 mile radius of one another. All of these congregations have declining memberships. Most of the church buildings will need expensive repair work within the next 10 years (roof replacements, foundation work, etc). The leaders struggle with the wisdom of investing a lot of money into old buildings of churches in decline. There was a lot of discussion about what the churches can do working together, especially in the area of outreach. Another meeting has been set for early November.
Home Mission Report  
(from Pastor Keith Free, Administrator)

**March 31, 2017 Home Mission Decisions**  
- 4 missions were authorized  
- 3 enhancements were authorized

- NEW START-Westminster CO-Multi-site, $84,000  
- NEW START Hendersonville NC-Multi-site, $83,000  
- NEW START-Huntersville NC, $116,000  
- NEW START Chattanooga TN, $122,000

Enhancement-Waukegan, IL-Immanuel, $85,000 (Hispanic-bilingual pastor)  
*Enhancement-Milwaukee, WI-Mt. Lebanon, $84,000 (School pastor)  
Enhancement-Little Rock AR-King of Kings, $48,000 (restart – full-time pastor)

*For FY 17-18, $50,000 from the FY 16-17 missions campaign will be used to help fund this enhancement ministry.

**From the spring of 2011 through the spring of 2017**  
- 42 missions have been authorized  
- 22 enhancements have been authorized

**Dedications**  
- The Word Lutheran in Stevens Point WI – January 27  
- Our Shepherd Lutheran in Cornville AZ – March 19  
- Redemption Lutheran in Watertown NY – May 21  
- Peace Lutheran in Aiken SC - May 21  
- The Springs in Sparks NV - June 4

Of these five dedications, the first four are dedications of buildings which were purchased and remodeled to be the mission’s worship facility.

**Campus Ministry**  
The Campus Ministry Committee met the morning of May 15 and afternoon of May 16. Between the meeting there was a Campus Ministry Conference with around 60 in attendance. On Monday evening Pastor Tom Trapp was recognized for 41 years in campus ministry, 38 at UW-Madison. The Chapel will have a special retirement service on June 25. Mrs. Karen Marshall, a member of the Missions Staff was also recognized for 25 years of serving campus ministry. Two members of the Campus Ministry Committee; Pastor Justin Cloute and Pastor Caleb Schoeneck were also thanked for their years of service on the Campus Ministry Committee as their terms come to an end June 30.

**Global Hmong Committee**  
In April Pastor Bounkeo Lor accepted the Call to serve as Hmong Asian Ministry Coordinator in SE Asia. It is a two-year Call. Working with the Pastoral Study Institute Team they have developed an eight-year curriculum and a four-year travel / training schedule for teaching and training in SE Asia. The primary group with whom Pastor Lor would work is the Hmong Fellowship Church in Vietnam as well as with a group of 55-60 spiritual leaders in southern China. As able Pastor Lor would also do teaching / training to Hmong in other countries.

The Global Hmong Committee continues to serve all WELS Hmong ministry through June 30, 2019. Prior to that time, both the Board for Home Missions and the World Mission Board will determine if the GHC continues to serve all of WELS Hmong ministry.
The chairman of the GHC is Pastor Bob Edwards. Pastor Leon Ehlert, a man with many years of experience with Hmong ministry recently was appointed to the committee. Pastor Pheng Moua is currently the only Hmong pastor on the GHC as after accepting the Call, Pastor Bounkeo stepped down from the GHC.

Home Missions – New Missions Initiative Campaign

During FY16-17 year, Home and World Missions, partnering with the Ministry of Planned Giving, has had a Missions campaign. The campaign is titled: “Every Neighbor, Every Nation WELS Missions and You.” At this time, God's people have offered close to $570,000.00 in gifts to Missions for which we thank the Lord. On February 23, the Joint Mission Council approved an allocation of $150,000.00 to Home Missions. At its spring meeting, the Board for Home Missions designed $60,000 toward church in the box purchases, $40,000 toward Praise and Proclaim campaigns and $50,000 toward assisting a new ministry (As noted above, Home Missions has designating this amount to Mt. Lebanon Lutheran in Milwaukee).

Church Extension Fund

Home Missions continues to enjoy its partnership with Church Extension Fund. Through loans and grants, mission churches can purchase land and build a worship facility or purchase a building and renovate it for its worship facility. Since 1993 when the current grant program began, close to $30M in grants have been given to mission churches.

At its February 2017 CEF Board of Directors meeting, the board made the decision to turn the permanently restricted net assets ($25M) into an endowment for Home Missions. From the annual payout of around $1M, Home Missions will receive around $800,000.00 and CEF will receive around $200,000 for the grant program. Home Missions is very thankful for this step as now there are additional funds to open and support the next missions.

Since January CEF has been offering special investment rates. Go to cef.wels.net to learn more. It is a great way to help support mission churches in North America.